

TELEPHONE: 1-800-HELPBUS (1-800-435-7287)

FAX FORM #819

## BUSINESS EMPLOYEES' SKILLS TRAINING (BEST) PROGRAM

The Business Employees' Skills Training (BEST) program was established by the Wisconsin Legislature to help small businesses in industries that are facing severe labor shortages upgrade the skills of their workforce. Under the BEST program, Commerce can provide applicants with a tuition reimbursement grant to help cover a portion of the costs associated with training employees.

### **ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:**

Eligible applicants include Wisconsin for-profit businesses that have 25 or fewer full time employees or annual sales of less than \$2.5 million and are in one of the following Industrial Clusters:

- Automation
- Agriculture/Food Products
- Biotechnology
- Information Technology
- Manufacturing
- Medical Devices
- Paper/Forest Products
- Printing
- Tourism
- Childcare (does not include in-home childcare)

### **ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES:**

Only costs incurred to train full-time employees are eligible.

### **ELIGIBLE PROJECT COSTS:**

Eligible project costs are limited to tuition costs for courses that are directly related to the employee's work requirements.

Note: All training must be provided by a qualified independent third party that is acceptable to COMMERCE.

### **INELIGIBLE PROJECT COSTS:**

- Costs incurred to train part-time and/or seasonal employees.
- Costs incurred prior to Commerce making a formal funding decision.

### **MATCH REQUIREMENT:**

Applicants will be required to provide a cash match of at least 25% of the Eligible Project Costs.

### **FUNDING AVAILABILITY:**

The maximum funding available is 75% of Eligible Project Costs not to exceed \$1,000 per full-time employee trained and \$5,000 per business.

### **UNDERWRITING CRITERIA:**

Given the limited funds available, projects are awarded on a competitive basis. Although Commerce can provide up to 75% of Eligible Project Costs, the actual level of participation, if any, is determined by an analysis of the following:

- Whether the business is in an Industrial Cluster.
- The wage level and benefit package provided to the employee being trained in relation to the cost of the training.
- The impact the training will have on the applicant's business operations.
- Viability of the applicant.
- Oualifications of the trainer.
- Whether the business is located in a Development Zone.
- Availability of funds.

### THE APPLICATION PROCESS:

Applications may be obtained by contacting Commerce's Business Development Assistance Center at:

1-800 HELP-BUS (1-800-435-7287) or by accessing Commerce's website at: www.commerce.state.wi.us

The applicant will complete the application manual and submit it to Commerce for review by a Business Finance Specialist. The Business Finance Specialist will underwrite the project and make a funding recommendation. The applicant will receive a decision in approximately 15 business days from Commerce's receipt of a **complete** application.

Incomplete applications will be withdrawn from consideration for funding.

If the grant is approved, the applicant will enter into a contract with Commerce that details the terms and conditions of the award.

### **INFORMATION ON TRAINING PROGRAMS:**

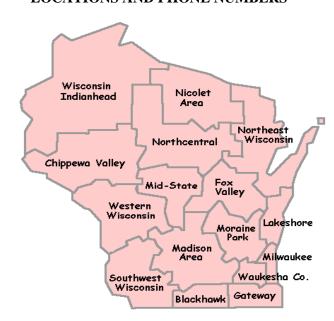
Although there are numerous eligible training providers within the state of Wisconsin, Commerce recommends that you first contact your local technical college or Small Business Development Center. These entities can help you identify and develop a training program that will adequately meet your needs.

# SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER LOCATIONS AND PHONE NUMBERS

# Wisconsin SBDC Network UW-Saperior UW-Saves Point UW-Saves Point UW-Platfeelile UW-Platfeelile UW-Platfeelile

### **UW-Eau Claire SBDC** Phone: 715/836.5811 **UW-Green Bay SBDC** Phone: 920/496.9010 **UW-La Crosse SBDC** Phone: 608/785.8782 **UW-Madison SBDC** Phone: 608/263.7680 **UW-Milwaukee SBDC** Phone: 414/227.3240 **UW-Oshkosh SBDC** Phone: 800/232.8939 **UW-Parkside SBDC:** Kenosha County Phone: 262/697.4525 **Racine County** Phone: 262/638.1713 **UW-Platteville SBDC** Phone: 608/342.1038 **UW-River Falls SBDC** Phone: 715/425.0620 **UW-Stevens Point SBDC** Phone: 715/346.3838 **UW-Superior SBDC** Phone: 715/394.8351 **UW-Whitewater SBDC** Phone: 262/472.3217 State Office Phone: 608/263.7794

# WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM LOCATIONS AND PHONE NUMBERS



Blackhawk	Phone: 608/758.6900
Chippewa Valley	Phone: 715/833.6200
Fox Valley Gateway	Phone: 920/735.5645 Phone: 262/564.2200
Lakeshore	Phone: 920/693.8213
Madison Area	Phone: 608/246.6100
Mid-State	Phone: 715/422.5300
Milwaukee Area	Phone: 414/297.6600
Moraine Park	Phone: 800/472.4554
Nicolet Area	Phone: 715/365.4410
Northcentral	Phone: 715/675.3331
Northeast Wisconsin	Phone: 920/498.5700
Southwest Wisconsin	Phone: 800/362.3322
Waukesha County	Phone: 877/463.9282
Western Wisconsin	Phone: 800/322.9982
Wisconsin Indianhead	Phone: 800/243.9482